INTRODUCTION

In 1996, the lowa Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning was asked by the Governor's Alliance on Substance Abuse (GASA) to examine the five Youthful Offender Programs (YOPs) that were in operation at that time¹. The focus of the original study was to describe the programs, their clientele, and two outcome measures (program completion and recidivism). One section of the report provided a detailed description of each of the five programs in operation at the time of the original study and the findings for each. Another section of the report highlighted program completion rates and recidivism rates.

The Youthful Offender Programs were designed to operate as part of a partnership with a number of different agencies (county attorneys, the district departments of correctional services, and a variety of different treatment agencies) to provide a holistic approach in the rehabilitation of youthful offenders. These programs were designed specifically for offenders between the ages of 16 and 21 who had committed first time felonies or aggravated misdemeanors as an alternative to incarceration or in response to non-compliant probationer behaviors. Offenders who were 16 and 17 years of age had to have been waived to the adult court to be eligible for entry to the program.

OBJECTIVES OF THE FOLLOW-UP STUDY

The primary objective of the current report is to provide the lowa Office of Drug Control Policy, the Iowa Department of Corrections and the judicial district departments of correctional services (DCS) with information describing the subsequent arrests and probation revocations of a sample of offenders who had participated in the judicial districts' Youthful Offender Programs (YOP) prior to December 31, 1996. In the original study, the amount of time a given offender had in which to recidivate varied by when they completed the program through June 30, 1997. The June end date was selected to allow for at least a six-month follow-up. This study extends the original recidivism period an additional 24 months. The primary objective of this study is to examine whether those clients who were not reported to have been recidivists during the original study had now recidivated.

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¹ Note that since the original report entitled "An Evaluation of Iowa's Youthful Offender Programs," GASA has changed its name to the Iowa Office of Drug Control Policy.

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

The YOP Study Sample

The original study sample included the total population of cases from program inception through December 31, 1996 for four of the five YOPs. The earliest admission dates for the five programs were:

- the $1^{st} 12/27/94$.
- the $4^{th} 7/28/95$,
- the $5^{th} 9/01/92$,
- the $6^{th} 10/31/94$,
- the $8^{th} 1/31/95$.

Because of the number of cases and the length of existence of the program in the 5th judicial district, CJJP staff decided to only sample a percentage of its cases. Approximately, thirty-three percent of the cases for the 3rd and 4th years of operation were studied. The reason for selecting these two years is twofold: (1) the level of information available for cases completed during the first two years was greatly limited compared to the information available for years three and four; and, (2) the 3rd and 4th years of information covered a similar period of time as the other four programs. The total number of cases obtained for each judicial district is presented in Table 1. During the original study time frame there were five Judicial districts that operated one YOP each. Since that time there have been two additional YOP offices added, one in the 1st and one in the 8th.

TABLE 1: THE YOP STUDY SAMPLE

JUDICIAL DISTRICT	N	%
1 st	27	12.8
4 th	8	3.8
5 th	74	35.2
6 th	67	31.9
8 th	34	16.2
TOTAL	210	100.0

Type of Program

In the original study, it was found that there were three basic types of YOPs: pretrial; post-trial; and a combination of both types. The first YOP to be established in the 5th judicial district was designed as a pre-trial program. Those offenders who participated in the pre-trial programs went to court after completion of YOP. Typically they received deferred or reduced sentences with the stipulation that they complete a given period of probation. The probationary period for the pre-trial offenders was typically one to two years.

The offenders who participated in the post-trial programs were typically sentenced to two or three years of probation, with YOP taking up part of that time. An exception to this rule was found in the 4th judicial district. An offender was discharged from the system upon successful completion of the requirements for YOP.

At the time of the original study, the 8th judicial district's YOP was primarily receiving offenders referred to the program by District Court Judges at the time of sentencing, although two individuals were experimentally admitted to the program on a pre-trial basis. This experiment was considered successful by the YOP staff and led to a significant increase in the numbers of pre-trial referrals after the original study was completed.

PROGRAM COMPLETION

Program completion was one of the major study variables examined in the original study. Offenders were considered to have successfully completed YOP if all or most of the program requirements had been met (see Table 2). There was some variation found among the programs as to the definition of a successful completion. In some of the YOPs, successful completion required the completion of all program requirements as stated in the court documents. In one of the pre-trial programs, however, offenders were designated as successful when they had not yet completed the educational component. In the pre-trial programs it was also common to find offenders designated as successful who had not yet completed their victim offender reconciliation program (VORP) or completed paying restitution. Unsuccessful completions included those cases in which offenders were terminated by program officials for non-compliance with program rules, criminal behavior, or for other reasons.

TABLE 2: COMPLETION RATES BY JUDICIAL DISTRICTS

JUDICIAL DISTRICT	TOTAL CASES	NUMBER OF SUCCESSFUL COMPLETIONS	SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION RATE
1 st	27	11	40.7%
4 th	8	4	50.0%
5 th	74	49	66.2%
6 th	67	34	50.7%
8 th	34	16	47.1%
TOTAL	210	114	<i>54.</i> 3%

RECIDIVISM

Recidivism rates were derived from information describing the arrests and admissions to corrections of the YOP offender participants following their termination from the program. The Department of Public Safety's computerized criminal history records, along with the Department of Corrections' automated information systems, were accessed to collect offender-specific data with which to track recidivism of the YOP participants previously studied. The Department of Transportation's computerized drivers license records were also assessed. Minor traffic offenses (e.g., simple misdemeanors) such as stop sign violations were not considered a recidivist act, but more serious offenses (e.g., serious misdemeanors and above) such as driving while barred were considered to be recidivism.

For the follow-up, it was decided to check the data against the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Interstate Identification Index (FBI III). CJJP was not able to access this database at the time of the original study due to a federal regulation limiting this information to law enforcement agencies. This regulation has since been changed. The primary reason for utilizing the FBI III for this project was to enhance information on arrests and convictions occurring out of State. Both the follow-up and original time periods were included in the check of these data.

For the purposes of this study, recidivism was defined as any new arrest resulting in convictions or in which the case was still pending before the court. Probation revocations were also included in this definition.

The period of time in which an offender could have recidivated was calculated from the time the client left YOP and the end of the data collection period. In the original study, the offenders were tracked for a minimum of six months after they completed the program. The actual time a given individual had at risk ranged from a minimum six months to just over 30 months. The average time at risk was 17.2 months, or about a year and a half. One of the primary reasons for the follow-up study was to extend the study period an additional 24 months and to examine any increases in recidivism for those offenders who were originally found to have not recidivated (see Table 3).

TABLE 3: TYPE OF YOP COMPLETION BY JUDICIAL DISTRICT AND TIME BETWEEN COMPLETION OF YOP AND JUNE 30, 1999

TYPE OF COMPLETION AND JUDICIAL DISTRICT	30.00 36. MON		36.20 42. MON	32	42.33 48. MON	38	48.39 T MON			2 TO GH
	n	%	n	%	N	%	n	%	N	%
SUCCESSFUL 1 st	7	63.6	4	36.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
4 th	3	75.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
5 th	11	22.4	9	18.4	11	22.4	13	26.5	5	10.2
6^{th}	5	14.7	8	23.5	9	26.5	12	35.3	0	0.0
8 th	8	50.0	6	37.5	2	12.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
SUBTOTAL	34	29.8	28	24.6	22	19.3	25	21.9	5	4.4
UNSUCCESSFUL 1st	8	50.0	5	31.3	3	18.8	0	0.0	0	0.0
4 th	3	75.0	0	0.00	1	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
5 th	5	20.0	8	32.0	8	32.0	3	12.0	1	4.0
6 th	8	24.2	13	39.4	5	15.2	6	18.2	1	3.0
8 th	5	27.8	5	27.8	3	16.7	5	27.8	0	0.0
SUBTOTAL	29	30.2	31	32.3	20	20.8	14	14.6	2	2.1
TOTAL Note: The average	63	30.0	59	28.1	42	20.0	39	18.6	7	3.3

Note: The average time between completion of YOP and June 30, 1999 was 41.6 months. There were 7 cases in which there was missing information and as such the time between completion and June 30, 1999 could not be calculated.

Time at Risk and Recidivism

Not all offenders had the total amount of time available within which to recidivate. Forty-two offenders (who were unsuccessful in completing YOP) were identified as having been in prison prior to recidivating. These prison sentences, however did not totally preclude the opportunity for recidivism. In some instances, these offenders were released from prison to shock probation or parole after serving as few as six months of incarceration. Some of the offenders who were terminated unsuccessfully from the YOP did go directly to prison while others were sent to the violators program, jail, or intensive supervision prior to prison. If an offender was terminated unsuccessfully from the program for a probation violation or otherwise sentenced on the YOP qualifying offense, the offense was not counted as a recidivist act. If an offender committed a new offense that resulted in new charges, it was counted as recidivism.

The length of prison sentences for the offenders who were unsuccessfully terminated from YOP included 16 who had sentences under 12 months, 19 who had been in prison between 12-24 months, and seven who had been in prison over two years. All of the offenders in this study were found to have had at least some time at risk regardless of having served prison time.

Table 4 is included to show the amount of time between completion or termination of a program and recidivism. The 42 offenders who were sentenced to prison following completion or termination of YOP were included in the following table. However, it should be noted that adjustments were made to account for their prison sentences. For the purposes of this study, prison time was not considered to be "time at risk." The prison time was therefore subtracted from the potential time at risk (the program completion date – June 30, 1999). The time between the end of the prison sentence and the first arrest after program completion was the new adjusted time to recidivism.

TABLE 4: TIME BETWEEN COMPLETION AND RECIDIVISM, BY JUDICIAL DISTRICT AND COMPLETION TYPE

TYPE OF COMPLETION AND JUDICIAL DISTRICT		-11.99 NTHS		0-22.09 NTHS	22.10-53.97 MONTHS	
SCDICHTE DISTRICT	N	%	n	%	n	%
SUCCESSFUL 1 st	1	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
4 th	2	66.7	0	0.0	1	33.3
5 th	7	26.9	11	45.8	8	30.8
6 th	13	54.2	5	20.8	6	25.0
8 th	2	33.3	2	40.0	2	33.3
SUBTOTAL	25	41.7	18	30.0	17	28.3
UNSUCCESSFUL 1 st	10	71.4	1	7.1	3	21.4
4 th	3	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
5 th	9	50.0	5	27.8	4	22.2
6 th	20	66.7	6	20.0	4	13.3
8 th	13	81.3	1	6.3	2	12.5
SUBTOTAL	55	67.9	13	16.0	13	16.0
YOP TOTALS	80	56.7	31	22.0	30	21.3

Note: The average time between completion of YOP and first new arrest was 14.9 months.

Completion Type and Recidivism

At the time of the original report, there was a 42 percent difference in the recidivism of the offenders who successfully and unsuccessfully completed YOP (see Tables 5 and 6). The follow-up findings indicate that the difference had decreased to 32 percent. These Tables show that the offenders who successfully completed the program continued to have lower rates of recidivism. Table 5 shows a 46 percent increase in the recidivism rates of those offenders who had successfully completed YOP, as compared to a 0.8 percent increase for those who were unsuccessful (see Table 6). Caution is urged in comparing the increases of the two recidivism rates, since the rate for those who did not successfully complete the program were found to be very high at the time of the original report.

TABLE 5: RECIDIVISM RATES FOR THOSE OFFENDERS WHO SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED YOP BY JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Original Study

Follow-up Study

JUDICIAL DISTRICT	TOTAL NUMBER OF CASES	NUMBER RECIDIVATED	PERCENT RECIDIVATED	NUMBER RECIDIVATED	PERCENT RECIDIVATED
1 ST	11	1	9.1	1	9.1
4 TH	4	1	25.0	3	75.0
5 TH	49	16	32.7	26	53.1
6 TH	34	20	58.8	24	70.6
8 TH	16	3	18.8	6	37.5
TOTAL	114	41	36.0	60	52.6

TABLE 6: RECIDIVISM RATES FOR THOSE OFFENDERS WHO UNSUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED YOP BY JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Original Study

Follow-up Study

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JUDICIAL DISTRICT	TOTAL NUMBER OF CASES	NUMBER RECIDIVATED	PERCENT RECIDIVATED	NUMBER RECIDIVATED	PERCENT RECIDIVATED		
1 ST	16	10	62.5	14	87.5		
4 TH	4	3	75.0	3	75.0		
5 TH	25	17	68.0	18	72.0		
6 TH	33	29	87.9	30	90.9		
8 TH	18	16	88.9	16	88.9		
TOTAL	96	75	78.1	81	84.4		

Program Type and Recidivism

In the original report it was indicated that offenders in the pre-trial programs were somewhat less likely to recidivate than offenders in the post-trial programs, regardless of whether the offenders had successfully completed the program or not. In the original report it was reported that the recidivism rate for the successful, pre-trial offenders was 28.3 percent and for the successful, post-trial offenders was 44.4 percent.

Table 7 shows that for offenders who successfully completed the program that pre-trial programs continued to have lower rates of recidivism, but this difference was much smaller in the follow-up than in the original study findings.

TABLE 7: PROGRAM TYPE BY TYPE OF COMPLETION AND RECIDIVISM

Successful Completion Unsuccessful Completion

PROGRAM	TOTAL	NUMBER	RECIDIVISM	TOTAL	NUMBER	RECIDIVISM
TYPE	COMPLETED	RECIDIVATED	RATE	COMPLETED	RECIDIVATED	RATE
Pre-Trial	60	27	45.0%	43	32	74.4%
Post-Trial	54	27	50.0%	53	49	92.4%

Sex and Recidivism

Over 88.9 percent of all offenders who participated in the five YOPs were male. The program completion rates for the males was found to be slightly higher than that for the females. There was one exception found in the 5th judicial district, where females had slightly higher rates of completion. The findings for the original study found that none of the females who had successfully completed YOP recidivated between their completion and the end of the study period (June 30, 1997). Table 8 shows that during the extended follow-up period two of the females had now recidivated. Given the length of the follow-up period the recidivism rate for females still seems low and may indicate that YOP has a greater effect on females who successfully complete than males who successfully complete.

For those females who did not successfully complete YOP, their rate of recidivism was slightly lower than that of their male counterparts. With the caveat that the number of female YOP offenders was quite low, it also might be concluded from the data that female YOP offenders recidivate at much lower rates than males, regardless of whether they successfully or unsuccessfully completed the program.

TABLE 8: SEX BY YOP COMPLETION TYPE, JUDICIAL DISTRICT AND RECIDIVISM

Successful Completion

Unsuccessful Completion

		Completion	Onsuccessiai Oompieaon			
GENDER & JUDICIAL DISTRICT	TOTAL COMPLETED	NUMBER RECIDIVATED	RECIDIVISM RATE	TOTAL COMPLETED	NUMBER RECIDIVATED	RECIDIVISM RATE
MALE 1 ST	11	1	9.0%	13	11	84.6%
4 TH	4	3	75.0%	3	3	100.0%
5 TH	42	25	58.1%	22	16	72.7%
6 TH	32	23	71.9%	29	27	93.1%
8 TH	14	6	42.7%	15	13	86.7%
SUBTOTAL	103	58	55.8%	82	70	83.4%
FEMALE 1ST	0	0	0	3	3	100.0%
4 TH	0	0	0	1	0	0.0%
5 TH	7	1	16.7%	3	2	66.7%
6 TH	2	1	50.0%	4	3	75.0%
8 TH SUBTOTAL	2 11	2	20.0%	3 14	3 11	100.0% 78.6%
TOTAL	114	60	52.6%	96	81	84.4%

Race and Recidivism

Approximately 81 percent of the offenders who participated in the YOPs were Caucasian, 16 percent African-American and three percent other. During the original study, five race/ethnic categories were tracked, including African-American, Caucasian, Hispanic, Native-American, and Asian/Pacific Islander. Since there were only seven offenders who were Hispanic, Native-American, or Asian/Pacific Islander, it was decided to combine these three groups for statistical analysis purposes. The findings presented in the original study showed that the Caucasians had the higher rates of successful program completion than each of the other two groups.

The data presented in Table 9 show that, regardless of the offender's race, those who successfully completed YOP recidivated at lower rates than those who did not successfully complete the program. However, Caucasians were found to have the widest range of difference in recidivism rates from 49 percent to 82 percent. The findings show that Caucasian offenders had substantially lower recidivism rates than the other two ethnic/race groups for those who successfully completed YOP. The differences among the three ethnic/race groups were not found to fluctuate as widely for the offenders who were unsuccessful in completing the program.

These data could be construed as raising the question of whether YOP and its component parts could be not as germane or relevant to other ethnic groups as they are to Caucasians. Of course, these difference would require further study and review of the component parts of YOP to insure that they are equally applicable to all ethnic groups.

TABLE 9: RACE BY YOP COMPLETION TYPE, JUDICIAL DISTRICT AND RECIDIVISM

Successful Completion Unsuccessful Completion

RACE &	TOTAL	NUMBER	RECIDIVISM	TOTAL	NUMBER	RECIDIVISM
JUDICIAL DISTRICT	COMPLETED	RECIDIVATED	RATE	COMPLETED	RECIDIVATED	RATE
AFRICAN AMERICAN						
1 ST	1	1	100.0%	4	4	100.0%
4 TH	1	1	100.0%	0	0	0.0%
5 TH	10	7	70.0%	7	6	85.7%
6 TH	3	2	66.7%	7	6	85.7%
8 TH	0	0	0.0	0	0	0.0%
SUBTOTAL	15	11	73.3%	18	16	88.9%
CAUCASIAN 1 ST	10	0	0.007	10	10	02.207
	10	0	0.0%	12	10	83.3%
4 TH	3	2	66.7%	4	3	75.0%
5 TH	36	17	47.2%	16	10	62.5%
6 TH	31	22	71.0%	24	22	91.7%
8 TH	16	6	37.5%	18	16	88.9%
SUBTOTAL	96	47	49.0%	74	61	82.4%
OTHER 1 ST	0	0	0.0	0	0	0.0%
4 TH	0	0	0.0	0	0	0.0%
5 TH	3	2	66.7%	2	1	50.0%
6 TH	0	0	0.0	2	2	100.0%
8 TH	0	0	0.0	0	0	0.0%
SUBTOTAL	3	2	66.7%	4	3	75.0%
TOTAL	114	60	52.6%	96	80	83.3%

Age of Admission and Recidivism

The ages of the offenders ranged from 16 to 21 years of age, with the majority of the offenders under 18 years of age having been waived to adult court. The original study findings indicated that the 18-19 year old offenders had lower rates of successfully completing YOP than those offenders in each of the other two groups.

The findings presented in the original study report indicated that the 16-17 age group had the lowest rate of recidivism for those offenders who successfully completed YOP (see Table 10). The follow-up study findings showed that this was no longer the case. With the two-year extension of time in which to recidivate it appears that the 16-17 year old age group now has the highest percent of offenders who successfully completed YOP who later recidivated. At the time of the original study, it seemed as if the programs had a greater impact or effect on the younger offenders who were successful in completing the program. The new data does not support this supposition, in fact, the opposite may be true.

TABLE 10: AGE BY YOP COMPLETION TYPE, JUDICIAL DISTRICT AND RECIDIVISM

Successful Completion

Unsuccessful Completion

Successiul Completion				Unsuccessful Completion			
AGE & JUDICIAL DISTRICT	TOTAL COMPLETED	NUMBER RECIDIVATED	RECIDIVISM RATE	TOTAL COMPLETED	NUMBER RECIDIVATED	RECIDIVISM RATE	
16-17 1 ST	0	0	0.0%	2	2	100.0%	
4 TH	2	1	50.0%	0	0	0.0%	
5 TH	16	10	62.5%	7	6	85.7%	
6 TH	1	0	0.0%	2	2	100.0%	
8 TH	1	1	100.0%	0	0	0.0%	
SUBTOTAL	20	12	60.0%	11	10	90.9%	
18-19 1 ST	9	1	11.1%	11	9	81.8%	
4 TH	1	1	100.0%	4	3	75.0%	
5 TH	31	15	48.4%	18	12	66.7%	
6 TH	22	17	77.3%	26	24	92.3%	
8 TH	15	5	33.3%	17	15	88.2%	
SUBTOTAL	78	39	50.0%	76	63	82.9%	
20-21 1 ST	2	0	0.0%	3	3	100.0%	
4 TH	1	1	100.0%	0	0	0.0%	
5 TH	2	1	50.0%	0	0	0.0%	
6 TH	11	7	77.8%	5	4	80.0%	
8 TH	0	0	0	1	1	100.0%	
SUBTOTAL	16	9	56.3%	9	8	88.9%	
TOTAL	114	60	52.6%	96	81	84.4%	

Education and Recidivism

All of the programs indicated that education (the attainment of a high school degree or GED) was a primary objective of the YOP. However, it became evident during the original study that some of the programs allowed offenders to be designated as successful in their completion of the program when they had not completed their degrees. Table 11 shows that regardless of educational attainment, those offenders who completed the program successfully had lower rates of recidivism than those who were terminated unsuccessfully. This Table also shows that offenders who entered YOP with the equivalent of a 12th grade education appear to recidivate at lower rates than others.

In the original study, It was also found that offenders who earned their high school diploma or GED while participating in YOP recidivated at lower rates than those that did not, regardless of whether they successfully completed or not. The follow-up study findings indicate that this continues to be the case.

TABLE 11: EDUCATION BY YOP COMPLETION TYPE, JUDICIAL DISTRICT AND RECIDIVISM

Successful Completion

Unsuccessful Completion

		esstui Compietio) <i>(</i> 1	Unsuccessful Completion			
EDUCATION & JUDICIAL DISTRICT	TOTAL COMPLETED	NUMBER RECIDIVATED	RECIDIVISM RATE	TOTAL COMPLETED	NUMBER RECIDIVATED	RECIDIVISM RATE	
LESS THAN							
12 TH GRADE	6	1	16.7%	9	7	77.8%	
4 TH	4	3	75.0%	3	2	66.7%	
5 TH	31	17	58.8%	15	10	66.7%	
6 TH	22	16	72.7%	27	25	92.6%	
8 TH	7	4	57.1%	10	9	90.0%	
SUBTOTAL	70	41	58.6%	64	53	82.8%	
GREATER THAN 12 TH GRADE							
1 ST	5	0	0.0%	6	6	100.0%	
4 TH	0	0	0.0%	1	1	100.0%	
5 TH	18	9	50.0%	10	8	80.0%	
6 TH	12	8	66.7%	6	5	83.3%	
8 TH SUBTOTAL	8 43	2 19	25.0% 44.2%	7 30	7 27	100.0% 90.0%	
TOTAL	113	60	53.1%	94	80	85.1%	

CONCLUSION

The primary objective of this follow-up study was to provide the Iowa Office of Drug Control Policy, the Iowa Department of Corrections and the judicial district departments of correctional services (DCS) with information describing the subsequent arrests and probation revocations of a sample of offenders who had participated in the judicial districts' Youthful Offender Programs (YOP) prior to December 31, 1996.

Caution is urged in interpreting the current effectiveness of the programs given that the follow-up study did not attempt to account for changes in the program since the time of the original report.

In the original study, the amount of time a given offender had in which to recidivate varied by when they completed the program through June 30, 1997. The June end date was selected to allow for at least a six-month follow-up. This study extends the original recidivism period an additional 24 months. Overall, it was found that by examining the same offenders for an additional two years that the recidivism rates did increase. Recidivism increased for both those offenders that were successful and those that were unsuccessful. The increase in recidivism was more dramatic for the successful cases and suggests that the longer the period of time after offenders complete YOP, the higher the chance of recidivism.

The findings tend to indicate that prior to 1997, YOP worked better for some groups of offenders than others:

- Pre-trial offenders successfully completed YOP at a higher rate than their counterparts in the post-trial group and were slightly less likely to recidivate following successful completion.
- Females recidivated at lower rates than males, regardless of whether they discharged successfully or unsuccessfully.
- Caucasian offenders had lower recidivism rates than the other two ethnic groups whether or not they completed YOP successfully.
- Offenders who entered YOP with a 12th grade education had lower rates of recidivism than those who had not.
- In the original report, it was stated that the 16-17 age group had the lowest rate of recidivism for those offenders who successfully completed YOP. It appeared at that time that the YOPs had a greater impact or effect on the younger offenders who were successful in completing the program. The findings presented in this report show that this is no longer the case. With the two-year extension of time in which to recidivate, it now appears that the 16-17 year old age group now has the highest percent of offenders who successfully completed YOP who later recidivated.